(i) Prasar Bharati, in April 1999 had requested the C&AG to get the audit of both AIR and Doordarshan (especially commercial, procurement and costing of programmes under comissioned category) conducted.

(ii) On a request from Prasar Bharati, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting made a reference to C&AG in August 1999 to conduct a special audit on the matters relating to "Doordarshan's Sports Consortium" and the serial 'Sri Krishna' respectively.

Regarding (i) above, it has been intimated by Prasar Bharati that C&AG has already conducted audit in most of the areas identified for special audit and the report is awaited.

As regards (ii) above, the C&AG has intimated that the Director General of Audit, Central Revenues is in the middle of a detailed audit in the matter of "Doordarshan's Sports Consortium" and the outcome of it will be reported a alongwith the audit report for the Financiai Year ending 31st March, 1999. As regard the serial 'Sri Krishna', since it was included in the audit for the year ended 31st March, 1996-No. 2 of 1997, the C&AG has intimated that the audit findings on the subject cannot be materially different to what has already been done and as such, a fresh audit on the subject will be superfluous. C&AG has accordingly expressed its inability to undertake any special audit on the serial 'Sri Krishna'.

Relaying Bengali news from T.V. Centre, Assam

53. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the news in Bengali is relayed only once a week from T.V. Centre, Silchar, Assam;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to relay Bengali news daily from the centre; and

(d) if so, by when this is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (d) programme matters of Doordarshan fall within the purview of Prasar Bharati which is a

statutory corporation and the Government does not decide upon these. Prasar Bharati have intimated that it has not been found possible to telecast Bengali news bulletin from Doordarshan Kendra, Silchar on daily basis due to constraints of manpower and other infrastructural facilities. However, the kendra is already telecasting two weekly round ups of 20 minutes and 5 minutes respectively with a view to cater to the needs of the Bengali population in its service zone.

New Broadcasting Bill

54. P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a new Broadcasting Bill is being introduced in the Winter Session of Parliament;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed legislation;

(c) whether the proposed legislation would include provisions for exclusive D.T.H. (Direct-To-Home) Broadcasting rights for Doordarshan for an initial period of five years as per the recommendations of the group of Ministers set up by the previous Government; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (d) The Government intends to formulate a new Broadcasting Bill for introduction in the Parliament at the earliest, details of which are yet to be finalised.

Special audit of AIR and Prasar Bharati

55. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry had made a request to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) to conduct a special audit of the A.I.R. and Prasar Bharati in some key areas like commercial services and procurement and pricing of commissioned and sponsored programmes;

(b) if so, whether the C.A.G. has since carried out the audit and submitted a report and if so, the details thereof; and